

Message Text

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44

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FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7379

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AFDROUGHT

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID NG

SUBJECT: ADDITIONAL FOOD AND FINANCIAL NEEDS - NIGER

1. EMBASSY RECIEVED LETTER MARCH 21 FROM MINISTER DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION BEMBELLO WARMLY THANKING U.S. FOR ADDITIONAL SORGHUM AS WELL AS OTHER ASSISTANCE UNDER R&R PROGRAM. LETTER ASKED USG ACCELERATE SHIPMENTS OF GRAIN ALREADY PROMISED AND TO MEET FULLY GON REQUEST OF 110,000 TONS CEREALS (100,000 SORGHUM AND 10,000 CORN). GON ALSO SEEKS USG FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO DEFER PART OF COST OF RECENT COMMERCIAL PEANUT SEED PURCHASES IN U.S., SENEGAL AND ELSEWHERE (APPROXIMATELY \$11 MILLION TOTAL). LETTER WAS SYNTHESIS OF ORAL PRESENTATION TWO DAYS EARLIER BY BEMBELLO AND AMBASSADOR DIALLO TO ACTING RDO, FFP OFFICER AND MYSELF.

2. NIGERIEN AUTHORITIES ARE PLEASED WITH LATEST TRANCHE U.S. SORGHUM. ALREADY PRESIDENT DIORI, FIVE MINISTERS AND AMBASSADOR DIALLO HAVE EXPRESSED THEIR APPRECIATION TO ME. ACCOMPANYING THEIR THANKS HOWEVER WERE PLEAS THAT SHIPMENTS BE SPEEDED UP SO THAT ALL U.S. SORGHUM BE IN COUNTRY BY END OF MAY. WITH UTILIZATION OF BULK EVACUATION TECHNIQUES AND USE OF APAPA STORAGE AND BAGGING FACILITIES MISSION BELIEVES TRANSPORT PROBLEMS THIS END BEING BROUGHT UNDER CONTROL AND THAT SHIPMENTS FROM U.S. SHOULD BE STEPPED UP SO THAT MOST OF SORGHUM SO FAR PROMISED NIGER ARRIVES AT COAST BY END OF MAY.

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3. NIGER GOVERNMENT STILL CONSIDERS ITS MINIMUM NEEDS IN CEREALS AT 220,000 TONS. MISSION ALSO REGARDS FIGURE AS VALID. OF TOTAL AMOUNT REQUESTED USG HAS BEEN ASKED SUPPLY HALF. ACCORDING TO GON'S CALCULATIONS WE HAVE THUS FAR PROMISED 78,000. GON COUNTS 22,000 TONS PROMISED BY USG IN FIRST QUARTER FY74 AS QUOTE LAST YEAR'S CONTRIBUTION UNQUOTE SINCE NIGER HARVEST AND FISCAL YEAR BEGIN OCT 1 AND GON CLAIMS THAT AMOUNT TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION AS BEING IN PIPELINE WHEN 220,000 TONS NEED FORMULATED. ON OTHER HAND GON CURRENTLY COUNTING LATEST 33,000 TON TRANCHE TOWARD USG TOTAL ALTHOUGH PARTS IS FOR WFP AND THAT ORGANIZATION ASKED TO SUPPLY 15,000 TONS OF 220,000. IN ANY EVENT THERE IS A SIGNIFICANT SHORTFALL DEVELOPING BETWEEN NIGER'S CEREAL NEEDS AND EXTERNAL DONATIONS. CONSEQUENTLY MISSION WILL SOON SUBMIT REQUEST FOR FURTHER FOOD ALLOTMENT FOR NIGER TO BE MET FROM 20,000 PLUS TONS IN STRATEGIC RESERVE FOR SAHEL.

4. ON SUBJECT OF PURCHASES AMERICAN PEANUT SEEDS, NIGER GOVERNMENT IS ASKING US FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE BY DIRECT GRANT OR BY INDIRECT SUBSIDIZATION POSSIBLY OF SHIPPING COSTS. WHILE USG CERTAINLY HAS NO OBLIGATION TO HEBP IN THIS REGARD, CONSIDERING DESTITUTE STATE OF NIGERIAN FINANCES AND MAGNITUDE OF TRANSACTION, USG CONTRIBUTION WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL AND APPRECIATED. BUCHE

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